United Nations S/PV.5786

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5786th meeting

Wednesday, 28 November 2007, 10.20 a.m.

New York

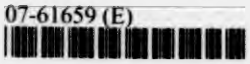
President:	Mr. Natalegawa	(Indonesia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Du Xiacong
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Durán
	Peru	Mr. Chávez
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Shcherbak
	Slovakia	Mr. Matulay
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Burundi

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-61659 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Burundi

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Charles Nqakula, Minister of Safety and Security of South Africa and Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process.

It is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Charles Nqakula, Minister of Safety and Security of South Africa and Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process.

I invite Minister Nqakula to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by His Excellency Mr. Charles Nqakula, Minister of Safety and Security of South Africa and Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Nqakula: Good morning to all members of the Council. The first thing I would like to do is to introduce the team that is accompanying me, represented as it is by my Deputy, the Honourable Kingsley Mamabolo, who is the South African Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region. I also have with me Mr. Adonia Ayebare, who is a representative of Uganda in this Chamber and also a member of our Regional Technical Committee and the facilitation team.

I want to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Security Council for the rare opportunity that you have given us to address the Council on the matter before us: the search for durable peace in Burundi.

The first issue that I would like to address is that of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, which was signed between the Government of Burundi, headed by President Pierre Nkurunziza, and the Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu (PALIPEHUTU)-Forces nationales de liberation (FNL), the last rebel movement to remain outside the democratization processes within Burundi, led by Chairman Agathon Rwasa. The Agreement was signed on 7 September last year.

Within 72 hours of the signing of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, we had hoped to see the finalization of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, but that process could not be finalized. Some problems had apparently emerged.

At this point, there are some PALIPEHUTU-FNL combatants who are ready to submit to the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. We represent the regional initiative of the African Union and serve as the initiative's facilitators, but we need help in order to start and complete that process.

I have spoken about problems that arose within the context of the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. It is now my intention to indicate what those problems have been.

First, the greatest problem was that the Ceasefire Agreement did not dispel the suspicions and mistrust that had characterized the earlier negotiation process. The Government of Burundi did not believe that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL would honour the Agreement. But, for their part, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL were also deeply suspicious of the Government and felt that it would not deliver on its side of the Agreement.

However, notwithstanding those suspicions, we put in place our own preparations for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. We also provided the PALIPEHUTU-FNL with funds so that they could go and deal with their combatants in order to fully explain the ramifications of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement.

In the middle of September, we took some of the leaders of the FNL into Burundi, so that they could assess the lay of the land, so to speak, with respect to the politics of the country and could also assess the security situation within the country. Once they were satisfied that conditions would indeed be conducive to their return to the country, we took them back to Tanzania.

We established the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JVMM) in October that year, although the PALIPEHUTU-FNL boycotted the launch of that structure. Although the FNL subsequently joined the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, they were erratic in their attendance of meetings. They later withdrew from the JVMM.

The situation in Burundi itself also militated against the finalization of the facilitation programme. The political landscape had been poisoned by a number of very bad judgement calls on the part of the Government and the leadership of the ruling Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie (CNDD)-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie (FDD). President Nkurunziza was also engaged in a standoff with the political opposition. Further compounding the problem were disagreements within the ruling party itself. The upshot of that was the detention of Mr. Hussein Radjabu, former President of the ruling party.

Members of the Security Council will be aware that some changes have recently occurred. And, although we are not going to claim a monopoly on the decisions finally made, we did provide input with respect to those changes. We were thus involved in a number of engagements with the President of Burundi, attempting to argue for a new approach to the political situation inside the country, which was becoming heated. To that extent, we advised him that it would be better for him to engage with the political opposition so as to mediate the stalemate that had occurred. Therefore, we are happy that, in the end, he was indeed able to deal with that situation and was commended by the leaders of both the Front pour la démocratie au Burundi (FRODEBU) and the Union pour le progrès national (UPRONA).

We also discussed with him the possible release of Mr. Hussein Radjabu. We believe that he is having a real look at that particular situation. Our argument was that it is only when his own party is united that he will be in a position to give proper political direction to developments inside Burundi, both with respect to the political climate in the country and as a contribution towards the finalization of the agreements made between his Government and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL.

We also influenced him to agree to a meeting, which to us was very important, to try to remove whatever obstacles still existed with regard to the problems that arose as a consequence of the mistrust between the two sides involved in the conflict: to actually attend a meeting where he would meet with the Chairperson of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL on a one-to-one basis. That meeting took place on 17 June 2007 under the aegis and direction of President Kikwete of Tanzania. That meeting looked at certain matters, and certain decisions were arrived at as a consequence of the discussions that took place between the two. Those decisions included the following.

First, both President Nkurunziza and Mr. Rwasa recommitted themselves to the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement. Secondly, both agreed that there was a need to reactivate immediately the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JVMM), which is the only vehicle available for the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement.

They also agreed to the expeditious implementation of the release of political prisoners and prisoners of war, using a system that they hammered out, which included the following elements. First, the FNL would immediately provide a list of its prisoners and a joint commission would be established, together with Burundi's Ministry of Justice, to screen the FNL list, after which the prisoners would be released.

They also agreed that there should be direct communications between the two leaders, so that they could unblock whatever problems might arise in the process of implementation of the decisions.

The last point of agreement was that the leadership of PALIPEHUTU-FNL needed to go back into Burundi, so that they could be part and parcel of the decisions that would be taken, as well as of the implementation of those decisions, thus giving proper guidance of the finalization of the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR).

But of course, a split occurred in the PELIPEHUTU-FNL. That split saw a number of combatants abandoning their positions and attempting to make themselves available to the facilitation for inclusion into the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. They did that in August 2007. But the move they took was not accepted by those who remained in their positions at FNL bases in a number of areas. Those areas include Rukoro and the Kibira forest, as well as bases in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Because there was unhappiness that some people were abandoning their positions, some FNL elements chased them out. On 6 September, 21 of those people were killed in Buterere. On 1 November, nine were beheaded in Rugazi. On 10 November, three leaders of those groups were also killed in central Bujumbura. We are of course aware of the fact that others have been killed right inside PALIPEHUTU-FNL camps, having indicated that they wanted to abandon their positions, or having been suspected of wanting to do so.

As the facilitation, we therefore needed to consider what to do in the circumstances, and we therefore approached the leadership of the regional initiative for guidance. What they said to us was that we should not forget the stipulations of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement. Among other things, the Agreement states: that the African Union shall establish a special task force for the protection of the leadership and combatants of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, including their movement towards the assembly areas; that the JVMM shall, in conjunction with the United Nations, address the issue of command structures and modalities for inner and outer perimeter security of the assembly areas; and that the JVMM and joint liaison teams shall assist in the processes of registration and verification of the combatants in the assembly areas. They also said to us that the desired process for that was for us — after all that had been finalized — to go to the bases of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and lead those combatants into the assembly areas, thereby providing them with protection so that they would not be attacked as they moved towards the assembly areas.

But the leadership said that nonetheless there were now people who wanted to become part of the process and that it was our responsibility to create those assembly areas and to put them into the assembly areas — thereby to start the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Of course, what we are talking about here is 2,700 of those combatants, who have made themselves available for this process. In our interactions with them, they have indicated that about 800 members of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, who did not abandon their positions, remain outside those areas. The way we read the situation, therefore, is that the great majority of FNL combatants have indeed abandoned their positions and are asking to be put into the process that must eventually lead to their reintegration into the political, social and economic life of Burundi.

After we saw some of those people in the assembly area at Randa, we addressed the international community to explain what had happened. Of course, it has become clear to us that the international community was reluctant to be part of this process. We were not told why the international community was reluctant. But we picked up from discussions at various levels that one of the matters they were raising was that we cannot be certain that the people who are professing themselves to be members of the PELIPEHUTU-FNL are indeed members. However, I want to explain to the members of the Council what our own attitude has been with respect to that.

If you have a figure of 2,700 people, some of whom are armed, who would be roaming the countryside in Burundi, you would potentially be faced with a problem in which those people would seek sustenance through food supplies, and therefore go to the villages to get that food. We can speculate that they will not be getting that food in any civil manner. In some instances they would, therefore, be forcing and even harassing and intimidating the villagers to give them food. We are aware, as has been indicated by the figures I gave, of subsequent attacks on those people by the remaining PALIPEHUTU-FNL. Those attacks, therefore, would continue to occur, and a situation might arise in which those dissidents would be fighting with the remaining PALIPEHUTU-FNL.

Within that context, which also would at some point obviously involve the general population, a situation would arise where the army of Burundi would also have to intervene. In other words, if we had not intervened as we did, we would have allowed a situation which would catapult the country into an orgy of violence and undermine efforts to reach a durable peace in Burundi. For our part and in our humble logic, we thought that it was necessary for us to take in those people, protect them against attack and of course ensure that they themselves did not go into Burundi to commit atrocities. That was our simple logic with respect to the matter because we did not know of any alternative for that situation.

Of course, we as Africans are still grappling with one of the blemishes on our conscience. When we allowed the situation to develop in Rwanda; when we

did not, as Africans, make an early entry into that situation, it finally culminated in the atrocities that occurred in Rwanda. Therefore, we are not going to allow any possibility of an outbreak of violence in Burundi. And we thought, in our humble logic, that it was better for us to take in those people into the assembly areas in order to protect them and to prevent them from participating in any atrocities. We did this based on instructions received from the leadership of the regional initiative; but it was our responsibility to do this.

We have heard that the reason the international community did not want to be part of this was because of the absence of the leadership of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL in those processes. Of course, we have been interacting with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL all the time, including by organizing a meeting that should have taken place last Sunday, but had to be postponed until Friday. This will be a two-day interaction between some leaders from the Government and the leaders of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. The meeting is to occur in Tanzania on Friday and Saturday and will be a continuation of our efforts to keep the leadership of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL in the loop, and to continue to ask them to participate in the process that in the end must result in the finalization of the programme of reintegration of members of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL.

There will also be a meeting between Mr. Rwasa and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tanzania. I will meet, as Facilitator, with Mr. Rwasa thereafter. We believe that if we are assisted by the international community, there are a number of things that we can do together to get the process finalized. At this time we are acting to finalize this programme on a deadline set by the African Union for 31 December. We are working very hard to meet that deadline.

Secondly, we as South Africans are the only ones at the moment providing food supplies to those PALIPEHUTU-FNL who have come out. We want the international community to help us to sort out the issue of the registration and reintegration of people who have already made themselves available.

When we addressed the international community after leaving Rwanda regarding those people that we had put into the assembly areas, we suggested that they go to Rwanda to observe the people who are there, interact with them and ask them questions in order to determine whether they are indeed PALIPEHUTU-FNL members or not. In a subsequent engagement with the media, they said that they had checked with the leadership of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, and that the leadership, based both in Tanzania and in Kenya, had denied that the people who had come forward were their members. In my other life I was a journalist, and I asked them if they had asked the pertinent question — which is pertinent indeed: whether the PALIPEHUTU-FNL had actually seen those people and, therefore, would be able to say that they were not former PALIPEHUTU-FNL. That is the first point.

The second point is that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL leadership had issued a number of press statements attacking the facilitation process, insinuating that we had engineered a split in the FNL. That split had, of course, manifested itself in the departure of some of the combatants from their positions. In a way therefore, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL were admitting to the fact that a split existed and that it had resulted from some of those combatants leaving their positions.

Our third humble argument maintains that if the PALIPEHUTU-FNL are indeed convinced that it is true that those combatants are not their members, they would have invited the international community to meet their members wherever they are, and ask them if there have been any people who have left. They would have done that, but they are not doing so because they themselves know the answer and we know it too, because we are active on the ground. We have received information and we have checked that information. We are certain that the great majority, if not 100 per cent, of the people at the assembly areas are members of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL.

We have assembled a team of people that we have defined as the Political Directorate to oversee the political fulfilment of the stipulations of the ceasefire agreement and to advise the facilitation on other political steps that need to be taken for the finalization of this process. If the international community helps us, then indeed there is a lot that we will be able to achieve for ourselves.

The Political Directorate is convened by Ambassador Mamabolo, whom I introduced earlier; serving on it also are the two ambassadors from South Africa and Burundi, respectively, the Executive Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Mahmoud, and the representative of the African Union, Mr. Ba. When the leadership of the

PALIPEHUTU-FNL is back on the ground in Burundi, they will also be able to field their own political representatives to the Directorate. Of course, the Government will also be invited to send representatives to the Political Directorate. We believe that the Political Directorate will be able to resolve some of the political problems that have arisen with respect to matters relevant to the search for peace in Burundi.

Finally, I want to return to my plea, and that plea represents the wishes of the African Union, those of the Regional Initiative and of course those of the three countries that are leading that initiative, Uganda, Tanzania and South Africa, as the facilitation countries. What we are pleading for is assistance from the international community and for assistance from the United Nations and its various structures. We want them to assist us, first, to oversee the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the 2,700 people who have already made themselves available for that process; and secondly, to help us to continue to put pressure on the leadership of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to take up their positions with respect to the implementation of the ceasefire agreement in all its dimensions, so that in the end, the facilitation programme is successfully completed.

One of the things we saw when we went to the camp in Randa to interact with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL people there was a lot of child soldiers. That is why we invited the international community to, among other things, go to that camp to see. Surely it must be our responsibility to take all of those children away from those conditions, so that, in keeping with the protocols of the United Nations, they can be raised outside of conflict. I still want to appeal to the members of the international community to take up the invitation that I extended to them to go into these camps we are now running, so that they can see for themselves who is there — in the first instance, to establish who all those people are, and, secondly, to look at the children who were forced to take up arms.

Once more, I would like to reiterate our appreciation for having been given this space to share the experiences that we have had in trying to assist the people of Burundi to overcome the difficulties they are facing so that they can all participate in the rebuilding of their country.

The President: I thank Mr. Nqakula for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Council.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Nqakula for his briefing. I would also like to welcome the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi, Mr. Youssef Mahmoud, and the Permanent Representative of Burundi, Mr. Joseph Ntakirutimana.

Since the successful conclusion of the peace process in Burundi, the persistent rebellion of the Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL) has constituted the most serious risk factor for the security of the population and the stability of the country. It is for that reason that we welcomed with hope the launch of negotiations that started last year following the signing of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of Dar es Salaam on 7 September 2006. France would like to bear homage to the ongoing efforts made by South Africa, in particular the personal efforts undertaken by Minister Nqakula, to support the peace process. We hope that these efforts will continue and that the Council, as Mr. Nqakula just requested, express its support. In my personal capacity as the chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflicts, I would like to assure Mr. Nqakula that what he has just said touches us all and that I shall do my utmost to ensure that our Working Group will take up the situation of children in Burundi in the nearest possible future. I believe that he has outlined in the most moving and accurate terms the reasons for which this situation should be addressed.

The continuing block in the negotiations is a matter of great concern for us all. It is crucial that the FNL rejoin the peace process as soon as possible, and, in particular, that they return to their place within the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism without delay and without any preconditions. At the same time, we wish to encourage the authorities in Burundi, as well as international partners in the process, to continue their efforts in order to enter into dialogue with this movement, as we are of the view that it is only in this way that we will give peace the greatest possible opportunity.

Our Council will have the opportunity to re-examine the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB). Without entering into the details of this future discussion at this point in time, my delegation would like to confirm its

full support for the renewal of the mandate, as we believe that BINUB has provided the most valuable support for the efforts of the authorities in Burundi in order to help build peace and stability within the country. We would like to encourage BINUB to maintain and increase its support for the peace process between the Government and the FNL by working together with the Facilitators.

Finally, beyond this process, our delegation would like to welcome the recent political developments that have taken place in Burundi through the establishment of a new National Unity Government on 14 November, as well as the framework agreement of 2 November on transitional justice. Thus, once again, the people of Burundi have shown that the spirit for dialogue and social cooperation that has always been welcomed by our Council continues to prevail and has made it possible for the country to make progress in peacebuilding.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, let me at the outset thank Mr. Charles Nqakula for his briefing on the state of progress in the peace process in Burundi and specifically with respect to implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement with the Forces nationales de libération (FNL). My delegation believes that it is crucial for the building of peace in Burundi that this Agreement be effectively implemented. Belgium therefore would like to express its full appreciation for the efforts of the Regional Initiative and of the Facilitator that are aimed at reinvigorating the peace process, which, as we know, has been in an impasse for some time.

My delegation fears that if the process is not properly concluded, that situation could lead to yet another cycle of tensions and, indeed, violence, in Burundi. We fear the negative security and humanitarian consequences should there be an extended stalemate. For that, the FNL must immediately resume its place in the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. The FNL needs to be reinvolved in the peace process. We believe that a military solution is neither possible nor desirable. The solution will be political one; it will not be a military one.

We sincerely encourage the Facilitator to robustly continue his efforts that are aimed at relaunching implementation of the Agreement. Belgium expresses its full support for and confidence in him. We need to know how we are to proceed in order to safeguard the Agreement and its implementation mechanisms. Like the Secretary-General in his latest report on Burundi, Belgium is also of the opinion that this relaunching of the process needs to be done in a comprehensive political framework that would make it possible to meet certain legitimate concerns, both in the Government and among the FNL. Without challenging the process under way, such a comprehensive framework would make it possible to address issues of a political nature, namely, issues related to security guarantees that have been called for by the FNL and defining the political future of that movement, or the granting of certain high posts to FNL members.

To that end, we call upon the leadership of the FNL to renew direct contacts with the Government, in order to address these issues. A slight adaptation of the modalities for implementation of the Agreement would make it possible without any doubt to better deal with some of these issues, such as the strengthening the role of the Steering Committee to which Mr. Nqakula has referred. The suggestion of the Secretary-General that the parties work out a road map could also, we believe, contribute to reinvigorating the peace process.

Lastly, Belgium is prepared to respond to the invitation of the Facilitator to visit the camps in order to take account of the situation as described by the Minister.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): I wish to express the appreciation of my delegation to Mr. Charles Nqakula, Minister of Safety and Security of South Africa and Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process, for his briefing on the latest developments on the Burundi peace process. We also acknowledge the presence of the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi, Mr. Youssef Mahmoud.

We recall the purposeful role played by South Africa in the Burundi peace process. It has not only endeavoured to ensure that full implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, but has also contributed troops to the African Union Special Task Force for the maintenance of peace and security in Burundi. South Africa's particular contribution is exemplified by its current effort, along with other countries in the region, to activate the peace process. Recently, it has undertaken a series of consultations, including with leaders of the Regional Peace Initiative and President Nkurunziza. The establishment of the

Political Directorate in Bujumbura emerged from those consultations. The Directorate is intended to address the political obstacles arising in the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement. We wish to emphasize the necessity of continued support and strong engagement by regional and international partners towards the successful conclusion of the peace consultation process.

Ghana welcomes the appointment on 14 November 2007 of the Government of National Unity, whose composition is in compliance with constitutional provisions regarding party, ethnic and gender representation. This development is encouraging, and President Nkurunziza's perseverance and the flexibility shown by the leadership of the Union pour le progrès national (UPRONA) and the Front pour la démocratie au Burundi (FRODEBU) in ending the political crisis that had paralysed parliament and other national institutions should be commended. We expect the new Government to focus its efforts on addressing the many outstanding peace consolidation and reconstruction challenges, progress on which had been stalled during the political crisis of the past months. Its highest priority should be to successfully conclude the last phase of the peace process.

We are particularly concerned by the resumption of sporadic armed clashes between the Force de la défense nationale and PALIUPEHUTU forces. Without an end to hostilities and a comprehensive ceasefire, the peace and stability required for effective reconstruction and sustainable development, will continue to elude the people of Burundi. It is therefore imperative for all political actors in Burundi, including the Forces nationales de libération (FNL) party, to engage in an inclusive dialogue with the Government and contribute positively towards the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement.

At the core of this are issues concerning the need for an agreement on the modalities for FNL's inclusion in national institutions and the conclusion of a forces technical agreement to determine the positions that former FNL combatants would occupy in the national security forces, as well as the release of FNL prisoners.

We are of the opinion that the Government and the FNL, with the assistance of regional partners and the international community, should be able to surmount these challenges. Despair is not an option. We commend the facilitation and the regional technical team for their efforts at reconvening the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and urge the FNL to overcome its internal differences and return to that mechanism.

Finally, we thank Mr. Nqakula for his tireless efforts aimed at finding a lasting solution to the conflict in Burundi. The continued presence and assistance of the United Nations, through the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi remains crucial to the consolidation of peace in Burundi.

Mr. Shcherbak (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, we would like to commend His Excellency Mr. Charles Nqakula and to thank him for his substantive briefing on developments in the Burundi peace process. The Russian Federation believes that the active mediation efforts of the Republic of South Africa in support of peace in Burundi are of fundamental importance for the successful implementation by the parties of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement — the basis for stabilization of the situation in that country.

The situation in Burundi continues to be extremely complex, but steps taken by President Nkurunziza and the Government give rise to optimism. Specifically, progress in the extended political process, formation of a new Government and a resumption of the work of the parliament give us hope that the stalemate in the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement will also be overcome.

Now, Burundian society faces a range of challenging problems. Finding successful solutions to them will be, to a great extent, the key to the future course of the country. The most important challenges are to strengthen peace and democratic governance, to carry out a national programme for the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, to reform the security and justice sectors, to protect human rights, to enact measures to fight corruption and impunity and to combat the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons. The Minister made specific reference to those problems today.

We note in this regard that responsibility for peacebuilding in Burundi lies first and foremost with the Burundian parties. The authorities and all political forces in Burundi must continue the reforms agreed upon in Arusha and Dar es Salaam and maintain a spirit of dialogue, consensus and universal participation that

will make it possible for them to successfully complete the transition in their country.

These key aspects are given specific emphasis in the draft press statement on the situation in Burundi prepared by our French colleagues. Full implementation by the parties of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement is the key to the stable development of Burundi in the future. We call upon the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and its leader, Mr. Rwasa, to fulfil their obligations under the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement and to resume practical activities in the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, in the spirit of the arrangements reached earlier with the leadership of Burundi in Dar es Salaam.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the activities of the Regional Peace Initiative, specifically those of Uganda and Tanzania, and for those of the Special African Union Task Force and the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi. We would also like once again to commend the mediation efforts of Mr. Nqakula, who is doing his utmost to stabilize the situation in that country.

In conclusion, we would like to state that we support the draft statement to the press on Burundi prepared by our French colleagues.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): We too join in welcoming the Facilitator for the Burundi Peace Process, His Excellency Mr. Charles Nqakula, and we thank him for his briefing to the Council.

South Africa notes with appreciation the important role the countries of the region, through the Regional Peace Initiative under the leadership of Uganda, and the African Union have always played in steering the peace process in Burundi towards a lasting and sustainable political settlement.

We commend them for the concerted effort they have made to help the people of Burundi realize their goals of peace, security and socio-economic development. South Africa has always been honoured to be called upon to contribute to this process, in order to help steer the peace process towards a sustainable political solution inclusive of all the Burundian people. South Africa has always believed that only political dialogue and reconciliation can guarantee a sustainable and lasting political solution in Burundi. We will continue to do whatever is necessary to support the efforts of the Facilitator and his team as they undertake their responsibilities.

The signing of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of Burundi and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL marked a significant milestone in the peace process and has contributed significantly to the overall improvement in the security and political situation in that country. Rightly, the Agreement brought hope to the people of Burundi, as there was a general expectation of peace dividends.

We were encouraged by the major breakthrough of bringing the Government of Burundi and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to sign the Agreement. We therefore join the call for the return of the FNL to the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, without delay or preconditions, and for all parties to fully implement the Agreement. South Africa is encouraged by the efforts of the Government of Burundi to promote dialogue and national reconciliation, and we call on them to continue on that path.

We call on the Security Council and the international community to act in unison in support of the Regional Peace Initiative and its programmes, in particular by supporting the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants who have come forward in the DDR process, now estimated at 2,700 combatants. We also call on the international community to exert pressure on the FNL to rejoin the peace process. South Africa will continue to contribute to the African Union special task force currently deployed in Burundi and do whatever else is necessary to finalize the facilitation process and bring an end to the conflict.

We are aware of the impending deadline of 31 December 2007 for the completion of the facilitation process, after which we are confident that the Regional Initiative and the African Union will reconsider the situation and take appropriate decisions on the way forward.

Finally, we commend the work done by the Facilitator, who we know has equally challenging tasks and responsibilities back home. We encourage him and his team to continue on that path, as determined by the Regional Initiative and the African Union. It is important that the process continue to receive the full support of the Security Council, in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

We also join in the support expressed for the draft statement drafted by the delegation of France.

Mr. Okio (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to welcome Minister Nqakula and to thank him for his briefing, in which he outlined the latest developments of the situation in Burundi. Above all, I commend the efforts undertaken by his country and other countries of the subregion to stabilize the situation in Burundi, which finds itself in a highly unstable political environment.

We agree that the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement provides the basis for a lasting solution so long as the parties are able to rise above their suspicions and establish a dialogue based on mutual trust and respect for their commitments. We agree with all the statements made by previous speakers to the effect that every pressure must now be exerted on the Palipehutu-Forces nationales de liberation to persuade it to return to the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism without delay or precondition.

In the context of the inter- and intra-partisan tension prevailing in Burundi, the international community must pay closer attention, above all, to supporting the Facilitator in his multifaceted work so as to ensure the coordination of efforts between the United Nations and the African Union and to mobilize the resources necessary to carrying out the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants, the impact of which was duly outlined by Minister Nqakula. I would also note that the potential deadline referred to Minister Nqakula and the representative of South Africa should be taken into account in the context of mobilizing resources and in all efforts to ensure the successful implementation of the DDR operation.

The difficulties besetting the subregion are such that the risk of a new outbreak of violence would also have a collateral effect on neighbouring countries and could even undo the efforts of the international community there, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We therefore support the appeal launched here today by Minister Nqakula for facilitation assistance so as to ensure the successful implementation of his programme of work. Any failure of that process would have unfathomable consequences.

The Congo supports the press statement prepared by the delegation of France.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to welcome Charles Nqakula, Minister of Safety and Security of South Africa. We thank him for his briefing on the peace talks in Burundi, where South Africa is playing a very important role as Facilitator.

We also thank the Secretary-General for his report on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), which is monitoring the situation there.

The time has come to end the 14-year civil war in Burundi. Throughout that time, the United Nations has played an important role in keeping peace and stability in that country and in preventing the conflict from spreading to the broader Great Lakes region of Africa. We should therefore support the role played by BINUB and the peacekeeping mission. We also commend the role being played by the Tripartite Commission — composed of Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa — which is mediating between the Government and the Palipehutu-Forces nationales de libération. South Africa is acting as Facilitator to those efforts.

Internal stability can be established in Burundi only through reconciliation between the Government and all the opposition parties. It is encouraging to note the establishment in the middle of this month of the current Government and its all-inclusive character. That will help the Government to extend its authority throughout the country and to ensure the precedence of its sovereignty, in accordance with international law. National dialogue cannot be understood to infringe on that principle; otherwise, it will send the wrong message to saboteurs and opposition factions that violence is acceptable, which in turn will encourage them to prevaricate, procrastinate and flout the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement.

Here, we would like to ask the Minister about the methods used in facilitating dialogue between the parties in Burundi while bolstering the Government's authority above all. That is particularly important now that we have heard that the rebels may have received funds that could enable them to take up arms against the Government. The Government needs to comply with international law, and specifically to respect the rights of women and children and human rights in general. The security sector must also be reformed in the framework of private ownership in the country.

Burundi's needs must be addressed if it is to rebuild itself. To that end, Burundi will require financial assistance from the international community and from donors, particularly following the conclusion of their most recent meeting, so that its people will not succumb to despair and frustration. The Bretton Woods institutions need clearly to understand the difficult economic situation in that country. The Peacebuilding Commission had set aside $35 million to meet Burundi's needs in its programmed budget. We stress that those funds must be made available to meet the basic needs of the people of Burundi — again, in the context of respect for private ownership in the country.

Burundi has consented to the cooperation agreement reached in Nairobi in December 2006 among countries of the Great Lakes region, which will have an important role in the post-conflict period.

In conclusion, we endorse the Secretariat's recommendation to extend the mandate of BINUB so that the peace process may be brought to completion.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I would like to thank Mr. Nqakula for travelling to New York to brief the Council on the latest developments in the peace process.

The United States calls on the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to return to the negotiating table, refrain from any further violence and implement its agreement with the Government of Burundi by 31 December. We are encouraged by President Nkurunziza's recent efforts to reach out to the political opposition in Burundi, which culminated in the allotment of several ministerial positions to opposition parties in November.

The United States congratulates Union pour le progrès national (UPRONA) member of parliament Yves Sahinguvu, the new First Vice-President. We trust that President Nkurunziza and he will work together to establish greater political cohesion and to focus on the problems facing the country. The United States commends the work of the African Union and United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) in facilitating the implementation of the ceasefire agreement between the Government of Burundi and the FNL and in providing support for the alleged FNL dissidents located in two camps north of Bujumbura.

The United States also welcomes the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission in creating an integrated strategy for peacebuilding in Burundi. We strongly support the Peacebuilding Commission's work in implementing that strategy to produce tangible, sustainable results for the long term, and to prevent a reversion to conflict.

Mr. Du Xiacong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes Mr. Nqakula's visit to Headquarters. We would also like to thank him for his briefing.

China notes that in recent years, under President Mbeki, the Government of South Africa has held high the banner of African recovery, calling for the unity and strengthening of the continent and for the resolution of its difficulties and problems, and facilitating the resolution of many hot-spot issues, including the situation in Burundi. That Government has played an important role and has made important contributions, winning praise from all sides.

Especially since the beginning of this year, South Africa, as a member of the Security Council, has called upon the international community to pay attention to hot-spot issues in Africa and to facilitate cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, and has called for strengthened cooperation between the two organizations. The delegation of South Africa, under the leadership of Ambassadors Kumalo and Sangqu, has participated actively in the consideration of issues concerning the African continent. They have spoken out, contributed and done a great deal of work towards the resolution of those issues. The Chinese delegation is deeply impressed.

China firmly supports the peacebuilding process in Burundi. We appreciate that, under the leadership of the Government, reconstruction efforts are making progress. We have also noted that many political, economic and security challenges remain. The progress made thus far in the Burundi peace process has not been completely satisfactory. We are concerned by that fact, especially since the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement signed by the Government and the Forces nationales de libération (FNL) has not been fully implemented. That is also cause for concern. We believe that all sides should fully implement the Agreement. We call on all sides to resolve their differences and take steps towards the true implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, bearing in mind the overall interests of the country.

China appreciates the work accomplished by the Facilitator. We support the untiring efforts of the regional partners. We call on the Government of Burundi and the FNL to fully cooperate in implementing the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement. China also calls upon the international community to provide assistance to the Facilitator and his team and to exert the necessary influence to promote progress in the implementation of the Agreement.

In conclusion, China thanks Mr. Nqakula for his effective work as Facilitator, and we wish him every success in his future work.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): A very warm welcome goes to Minister Nqakula for his very substantive briefing and for the truly outstanding contribution that, as Facilitator, he is making to the process. I also welcome among us the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi and the Permanent Representative of Burundi.

Allow me to begin by saying that all of us have long felt that Burundi must be a success story for the United Nations. We are committed to Burundi becoming a success story. Therefore, the Peacebuilding Commission chose Burundi, together with Sierra Leone, as the first country cases to address comprehensively. We cannot afford the luxury of losing the challenge of making Burundi a success story.

I think, Mr. Nqakula, that your work as Facilitator truly does honour to South Africa and to you personally. We are grateful for your role and, of course, the role of the Regional Peace Initiative, in teamwork with the African Union and with the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB). There is a lot at stake, and that is why we are so grateful.

I would like to touch upon one issue. You, Mr. Nqakula, have stressed several times the need for the support of the international community. First of all, you will get that support after this meeting, because you certainly need to have your hand strengthened in your dealings and facilitation efforts. There is no doubt about that.

Here I will not use my words, but those of the draft presidential press statement — and I am very grateful to the French delegation for preparing it. In that statement, we will make clear today, to public opinion and to the international community, that we support the work of the Facilitator. We will urge the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to return to the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism without delay or preconditions, and we will call on both parties, as we have heard previous speakers do, to refrain from any action that might lead to a resumption of hostilities.

Here I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, whether, beyond this, you have something in mind that you expect, specifically, from this body? What else can we as the Security Council be doing, for the moment, to support you and the Regional Peace Initiative, to strengthen your hand and ease the way forward in the peace process, in order to prevent a relapse into hostilities? Do you have something specific in mind that we can do? Of course, we — the members sitting around this table, who are also members of the Peacebuilding Commission — will certainly encourage the Commission to strongly involve itself in doing everything possible to facilitate the peace process.

Again, my question is: do you have something more in mind that we can do? Because, as I said, we want Burundi to be a success story.

Mr. McKenzie Smith (United Kingdom): I can be brief, because I would associate myself and our delegation with many of the points made by other Council members this morning.

May I begin by joining others in thanking the Minister for his very timely report this morning. The United Kingdom welcomes the huge efforts that South Africa has made in bringing Burundi to the very point of achieving peace, and we would welcome the continued commitment of South Africa, together with the Governments of the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, to that peace process, in particular to bringing the Forces nationales de liberation (FNL) along the final steps towards a lasting and durable peace.

Like others, we agree that the recent reshuffle in the Government of Burundi offers an opportunity for a new political dynamic. The opposition parties are now part of the new consensus Government and, among other commitments, have stated their willingness to help bring the FNL back to the table. This is an opportunity that should not be missed. Both the Government of Burundi and the FNL need to be encouraged to iron out their outstanding political differences, so that the peace process can be launched. It is very clear — and the Minister's briefing this morning reinforced the point — that any kind of military solution would incur high

humanitarian and political costs and would be an unacceptable step backward.

Lastly, we welcome the draft press statement prepared by the delegation of France in consultation with the delegation of South Africa.

Mr. Chavez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): In turn, I would like to express my gratitude for the statement made by Minister Nqakula, the Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process, and to convey to him our acknowledgement both to his country, South Africa, and to the other countries of the region, for all the efforts that they have deployed in order to support the United Nations in the context of the peacebuilding process in Burundi.

Like previous speakers, I would also like to underscore that, as far as Peru is concerned, Burundi is an important example for us. We need to ensure that this becomes a successful example, and to that end we support the work being undertaken by the Peacebuilding Commission.

On this occasion, I would like to make the following two brief comments in order to express the fact that my delegation shares the ideas that were outlined earlier by Minister Nqakula with regard to the situation in Burundi. The first of these concerns the fact that the Peace Agreements and the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, unfortunately, have not yet created the confidence needed to make it possible to establish dialogue and to build peace. In this regard, the deadlock in the implementation of the ceasefire agreed between the Government and the Forces nationales de liberation (FNL) is a cause for concern. We are of the view that greater efforts undertaken by the neighbouring countries, and also by the African Union, should be geared towards supporting both the Government and the FNL in order to ensure that this dialogue continues and to ensure that a climate of trust can be established and to ensure that we do not return to a cycle of violence. Dialogue, without conditions, is necessary to ensure full compliance with the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement.

The Government should refrain from taking actions that would undermine its positive interaction with the FNL. At the same time, the FNL should refrain from armed responses. Therefore, there is a need to come up with creative mechanisms that can be used in order to meet the requirements laid down in the Agreement and to ensure that the FNL returns to the Joint Verification Monitoring Mechanism, thus avoiding an outbreak of hostilities.

We are convinced that a conflict would only result in greater violations of human rights, would increase instability and would further impede the restoration of peace in Burundi. Without peace, it would not be possible to rebuild the country, nor would it be impossible to attract private investment, which is crucial to allow Burundi to move in the right direction, allowing it to rebuild its own economy.

The second comment made by Minister Nqakula that I wish to touch upon is the comment indicating the internal situation in the country. This situation is not contributing greatly to the peace process. In this context, we would also like to express our concern for ensuring proper governance and democracy in Burundi. There is a need to establish an inclusive, democratic system, respectful of all parties. To that end, we believe that the establishment of a system of robust parties, in which opposition to the Government is respected and in which freedom of the press is ensured within the context of the law, is crucial.

We hope that the new Government will be successful in its efforts to that end and will continue an inclusive and transparent dialogue.

Mr. Matulay (Slovakia): We would like to add our voice to those of other colleagues in thanking Minister Nqakula for his very timely and informative briefing. We would like to commend his efforts in facilitating the Burundi peace process, as well as the efforts of other important international actors, in particular the Regional Initiative and the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi.

We are very concerned about the situation in Burundi, and we are following it closely. Two years after the holding of elections and one year after the signing of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, we not only face a protracted stalemate in the peace process, but we also have already witnessed instances of open fighting. This is a very serious, even dangerous, development. The international community should do all it can to prevent a relapse into hostilities.

We believe that a sustainable solution can be achieved only through political dialogue. In this context, we fully concur with the briefing and with the information that Minister Nqakula has shared with us,

and we commend his efforts aimed at reaching this particular goal.

There is an urgent need for the resumption and early implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement within an overall political framework that would address the concerns of the Government and of the Forces nationales de libération (FNL). We hope that all Burundian parties will be able to show political maturity and to engage in dialogue in good faith.

Therefore, we call on the Government and on the FNL to urgently resume the peace process and to create conditions for Burundi to recover from the conflict.

In concluding, we would like to encourage Minister Nqakula in his capacity as Facilitator to continue with his efforts, working closely with the parties in Burundi and with the regional parties, to achieve the final objective, which is peace, stability and sustainable development in Burundi.

Lastly, we support the draft press statement that has been prepared by the delegation of France, and we thank France for preparing it.

Mr. Suescum (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, we would like to welcome and to thank Minister Nqakula for his detailed briefing and to convey to him our delegation's gratitude for the carrying out of his duties as Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process. In turn, we would also like to commend the efforts undertaken by the African Union, the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi and the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi, as well as the work undertaken in that country by the Peacebuilding Commission, in order to obtain peace and sustainable development there.

Like previous delegations who have taken the floor, we welcome the establishment of the new National Unity Government and encourage the new members of the cabinet to set aside their political differences and to work together for common objectives, such as national reconciliation, development and stability in Burundi.

We note that the deadlock in the peace negotiations, in particular the intransigence demonstrated by certain members of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and their refusal to join the negotiations, represents one of the greatest obstacles to peacebuilding in the country and in that context we call upon the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to join without delay and without preconditions, the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism in order to arrive at a political solution and thus ensure the rapid implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement.

For its part, the Government of Burundi must also double its efforts to facilitate the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, as well as its efforts to reform the security sector.

Allow me to emphasize that for Panama, peace and justice are two sides of the same coin. In that context we call upon the Government of Burundi and the United Nations to continue negotiations in order to define relations between a truth and reconciliation commission and a special tribunal, which will ensure that perpetrators of international human rights violations and crimes against humanity will be brought to justice, making it clear that human rights are not negotiable.

Finally, Panama supports the draft press statement as has been presented to us.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Indonesia.

We thank His Excellency Mr. Charles Nqakula, Minister of Safety and Security of South Africa and Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process, for his briefing on the latest developments in the peace process in Burundi.

Our delegation would like to stress our support for the peace process in Burundi and the positive role played in that effort by the Facilitator personally, by the countries of the region through the Regional Initiative and, of course, by South Africa. In that regard, we are mindful of the importance of the establishment of a new Government in Burundi in November 2007 and view this more inclusive nature as a significant step in bringing opposition elements fully into the peace process. We hope that all political parties will be able to collaborate collectively in the interest of the country as a whole.

In this peace process we encourage the parties to implement all of the provisions agreed under the Dar es Salaam Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of September 2006. Further, we call on all Burundian political stakeholders to maintain the spirit of dialogue, consensus-building and inclusiveness, including in addressing the issue of power-sharing in an equitable manner which has enabled them to achieve a successful transition in their country.

We also appreciate the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in supporting Burundi to achieve long-term peace and stability. We encourage the Government of Burundi to intensify its efforts in all aspects of security sector reform, particularly with respect to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, so that the presence of potentially armed elements and the incentives for conflict will be reduced. Related to security sector reform is the problem of small arms and other weapons in the country which also contribute to violence and instability. Efforts must be made to stem the flow of those weapons in order to create conditions conducive to peace. Once again, Indonesia would like to reiterate its support for the peace process in Burundi.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to the Minister of Safety and Security of South Africa and Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process, His Excellency Mr. Charles Nqakula, to respond to the questions raised.

Mr. Nqakula: I too would like to record my appreciation and the appreciation of the African Union and the Regional Initiative for the very constructive observations and remarks that have been made by members of the Council, and also to express appreciation for the suggestions, as well as for the promises of support to our facilitation efforts.

We appreciate the fact that there is an all-round understanding by all of us of the need to complete this process and thereby lay a foundation for conditions of peace to prevail in Burundi. I once more wish to indicate our desire to ensure that, in the first instance, the facilitation process between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the Government of Burundi continues and is successful in its efforts. Secondly, we shall do whatever is necessary to help the Government of Burundi to overcome the various political challenges that it faces, by respectfully submitting to it whatever suggestions we may have as facilitators. This we shall do on the authority granted us through the negotiations process when, as we were defining the political principles of engagement, it was first indicated that we — as the Regional Initiative and the African Union and, of course, through the facilitation — would continue to be guarantors of the process for the search for peace in Burundi until that had been achieved.

What that means to us is that our function will obviously not end with the finalization of the facilitation process. That accords with the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement. We would like to be part and parcel of any effort, particularly the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, that is designed to ensure that the country as a whole continues in a position where, in the end, programmes will be in place for the development of Burundi. In other words, the people of Burundi will be able to enjoy the fruits of the democracy that they helped to usher into their country.

There are several things, therefore, that we will do. When considerations are made with respect to the way forward, we urge that we continue to be invited to participate in any discussions to enable us to share our own experiences with regard to the work we have been able to do in Burundi.

We appreciate the fact that all have assured us that the Security Council will also do whatever is necessary to support our Initiative. Here, I want, once again, to call upon the nations of the world to help us finalize that programme, to help us deal with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, as the President of the Council has said, and to help us deal with the political situation inside the country in order for us to create the necessary atmosphere for political engagement there on a level political playing fields. We will do our part, as I have already indicated, on the basis of the role that we were given. We will not only negotiate peace on the basis of the defined Ceasefire Agreement, but will also act on the basis of advice and guidance from the political principles that were negotiated and signed on 18 June 2006 by the two parties. At that time it was indicated the kind of role we would continue to play with respect to the consolidation of peace in Burundi.

We also wish to make a strong call for continued assistance in applying pressure to the leadership of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, not to define themselves as out of this process, but to take their rightful position to lead the process towards its finalization. It is therefore our plea to all the nations of the world that they must speak with one voice on this issue. If we did that, there would be no recourse for the PALIPEHUTU-FNL leadership. That might, therefore, put pressure on the peace process, which can still easily be derailed.

Let me return once again to an issue that worries us greatly. As I indicated in my initial statement, when

we went to the camps where the people who have left their bases are, we found many children. It is our plea that the international community assist us in dealing with the issue of those children. For our part, we will do whatever is necessary to ensure that a process under the aegis of the Security Council is indeed begun, so that we can deal with that question. In addition, some people who have left their bases are ill, and we have not been able to attend to all their medical requirements. Sooner rather than later, the international community should come in, so that it can assist with that problem as well.

But we will leave this Chamber confident that the nations of the world are going to assist us in finalizing what is essentially only an initial step towards the rebuilding of Burundi. In future, we shall rely a great deal on the Peacebuilding Commission, as the nations of the world define a process that must take Burundi away from a past that has seen many of that country's nationals massacred, to a position where everyone in Burundi will derive the much needed benefits from the political settlement that is beginning to develop. We ourselves, who respect democracy and are particularly keen to help countries emerging from conflict, will also take up cudgels on behalf of those who want to build peace in Burundi.

The President: I thank Minister Nqakula for the clarifications he has provided.

I wish to take this opportunity, on behalf of the members of the Council, to thank Minister Nqakula for his briefing this morning.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.